



Hammacher Schlemmer

Established 1848 New York City

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A TIMELINE: A HAMMACHER SCHLEMMER HISTORY

Back in 1848, when the great rush for gold in California began, when baseball was first played on a diamond, when most of the Western states as well as Alaska were foreign soil, Hammacher Schlemmer was founded at 221 Bowery in lower Manhattan. Hammacher Schlemmer's history has all the makings of an old-fashioned American success story. Here is a chronological look at the company's growth.

- 1848: William Tollner opens a small hardware business as 221 Bowery.
- 1853: Tollner's nephew, William Schlemmer, a young lad of 12, arrives from Germany and sells tools on the sidewalk in front of his uncle's hardware store.
- 1859: After investing \$5,000 in Tollner's business, Alfred Hammacher became part owner. The name was changed to Tollner and Hammacher and the store moved to 209 Bowery.

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HAMMACHER SCHLEMMER TIMELINE

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- 1867: William Schlemmer slowly purchased his uncle's shares in the firm until he died. Schlemmer changed the name to Hammacher and Company.
- 1878: Bell Telephone Company of New York produced it's first directory with 271 subscribers, including Hammacher and Company.
- 1881: Hammacher and Company puts out the first catalogue highlighting the company's products.
- 1883: Business takes the name of Hammacher Schlemmer and Company.
- 1899: Hammacher Schlemmer began selling automotive parts and automotive tools when there were only 600 cars in New York.
- 1900: Hammacher Schlemmer and Company had the largest inventory of tools and hardware in the east to this date.
- 1920: An advertising campaign featuring whimsical gnomes carrying tools became trade symbols of Hammacher Schlemmer and Company.
- 1926: The firm moved to its present location, a twelve story building at 147 East 57th Street.
- 1931: Hammacher Schlemmer mailed out its first housewares catalogue.
- 1935: Hammacher Schlemmer hired the store's first female salesperson.
- 1953: Elsie Schlemmer, widow of William F. Schlemmer sold the company to a group of investors.
- 1955: Hammacher Schlemmer discontinued its hardware department and focused on luxury items.
- 1959: Dominic Tampone became president after having worked his way up from position of stock boy.

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- 1961: Hammacher Schlemmer offered a regulation size bowling alley for \$4,300; \$8,000 for two lanes.
- 1962: Hammacher Schlemmer expanded Invento Products Corporation, its wholesale division.
- 1964: Hammacher Schlemmer sold 24 used London taxi cabs at \$18.95 each.
- 1975: Gulf & Western purchased Hammacher Schlemmer.
- 1978: Hammacher Schlemmer produced and mailed seven catalogues during the year. More than half its customers used catalogues to order by mail.
- 1980: J. Roderick MacArthur purchased Hammacher Schlemmer from Gulf & Western.
- 1984: Hammacher Schlemmer opens store at 618 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago.
- 1986: Hammacher Schlemmer opens first west coast store at 309 N. Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, California.
- 1988: Hammacher Schlemmer celebrates its 140th anniversary. The company mails 10 catalogs that year to more than two million customers.

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